

EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Oakland County, MI

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected Oakland County for a Brownfields Pilot. Oakland County was also selected to receive additional funding for assessments at Brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. Oakland County (population 1,225,000) is located northwest of Detroit and comprises 61 cities, townships, and villages within its 900 square miles. More than 26 percent of the county's residents have low to moderate incomes, with poverty rates in certain areas between 12 percent and 27 percent. Although, automotive production and other heavy industries historically dominated the economy, today Oakland County is also home to a growing high-tech industry. However, the years of industrial production and farming have yielded numerous brownfields throughout the county. Aging urban corridors, environmental contamination, and failure to utilize the existing built infrastructure all contribute to their abundance.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Oakland County, MI

Date of Announcement:
May 2000

Amount: \$200,000
Greenspace: \$50,000

Profile: The Pilot focuses on using brownfields redevelopment to restore vacant or underutilized properties to productive use, promote economic growth, and protect natural resources throughout Oakland County.

Contacts:

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Visit the EPA Region 5 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

OBJECTIVES

The Pilot's objective is to promote the redevelopment of brownfields throughout the county in an effort to foster economic growth and protect natural resources. Through site assessments, the creation of advisory groups, and the involvement of the community to support brownfields redevelopment, the Pilot will help return vacant and underutilized properties to public and private uses. In turn, this will conserve undeveloped land, create jobs, expand the county's tax base, and leverage additional funds for future brownfields redevelopment. Ultimately, communities will be empowered to restore their previously developed and underutilized land to productive use. In addition, the Pilot will use greenspace funding for planning and assessment purposes to restore the Clinton River in the City of Pontiac. The site is currently a parking lot but will be redeveloped into an open-air channel for the river.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Establishing a Brownfields Advisory Board from municipalities with existing Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities (BRA) and encouraging other municipalities to establish BRAs;
- Identifying brownfields sites within Oakland County for assessment;
- Performing Phase I and Phase II site assessments and baseline environmental assessments;
- Conducting community outreach activities; and
- Carrying out Phase I and II site assessments at the Clinton River site for redevelopment into a greenspace use.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.